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Report of the Committee on Housing and Land Management on its seventy-eighth session

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I. Introduction

1. The Committee on Housing and Land Management held its seventy-eighth session in Geneva from 8 to 10 November 2017.

A. Attendance

2. Representatives of the following ECE countries participated: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America.

3. Representatives of the following United Nations programmes and specialized agencies attended: the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT).

4. Representatives of the following intergovernmental organizations attended: Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy of the European Commission, EU Committee of Regions, the European Investment Bank, Metropolitan Research Institute, URBACT EU Programme, Council of Europe Development Bank, International Centre for Migration Policy Development, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

5. Representatives of the following non-governmental organizations attended: AIIC Ltd. and National Real Estate Association, American Institute of Architects - AIA Europe, the Association for Farmers Rights Defense, the Centre for Socio-Economic Development, C.R.E.A.M. Europe PPP Alliance, Development Solutions Institute Foundation, ES VICIS Foundation, EUROCITIES, FEANTSA, Fédération des Entreprises Sociales pour l'Habitat, Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services, Global Sanitation Fund, Habitat for Humanity International, Housing Europe, the International Council of Women, the International Federation of Surveyors, International Real Estate Federation, Inter-Agency Network for Education on UN-International Goals, the International Society of City and Regional Planners (ISOCARP), the International Union of Tenants, the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors, Tirana European Network of Housing Research 2017, Union sociale pour l'habitat and URBASOFIA.

6. Private-sector representatives, independent experts and academics from universities and research institutions also attended, at the invitation of the secretariat.

B. Adoption of the agenda

Documentation: ECE/HBP/189

7. The Chair of the Committee, Ms Elena Szolgayová (Slovakia), presented the provisional agenda, which was adopted without any changes.

C. Organizational matters

8. The Chair reported that 220 delegates from 44 countries had registered for the meeting.

9. Ms. Ivonne Higuero, Director of the ECE Forests, Land and Housing Division, welcomed the participants and congratulated the Committee on its seventieth anniversary. She highlighted the important role of the cooperation of member States in implementing the New Urban Agenda and the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and the achievements of the SDGs. Ms. Higuero underlined that the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing provides important support to the 2030 Agenda in the area of sustainable cities and human settlements. Ms. Higuero also noted the importance of the Geneva UN Charter Centres, which are being established in countries in cooperation with Governments, local authorities and stakeholders. The Centres are important tools in promoting effective implementation of the global and regional international commitments. She informed the Committee that the Charter has been translated into ten languages.

10. Mr. Brian Evans, Professor and Head of Urbanism, the Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, UK, signed the Memorandum of Understanding for the establishment of the centre in City of Glasgow, UK, on behalf of the centre's host institution, the Glasgow School of Arts.

II. Introduction of the draft Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development

Documentation: ECE/HBP/2017/1

11. The Chair presented the draft Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development, which was developed by the Committee prior to the session and agreed through an extensive consultation process. She asked the Committee to endorse the Declaration so that the Ministers and the heads of delegation of the ECE region could adopt the Declaration during the Ministerial Segment on 9 November 2017.

12. The Committee endorsed the Ministerial Declaration for the adoption by the Ministers and heads of delegation in the ministerial segment of the seventy-eighth session of the Committee.

III. Review of the implementation of the programme of work 2016-2017 since the seventy-seventh session

A. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Global Indicators Framework, the New Urban Agenda and other global agreements in the ECE Region – implications to the work of the Committee

Documentation: A/RES/70/1; A/CONF.226/4; ECE/HBP/2017/2; Information Document 1

13. A panel discussion entitled "The role of national governments in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda and other relevant global agreements" was held to deliberate on strategic approaches and challenges to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and other key relevant global and regional agreements at national level. The panel members representing the Committee, the ECE, UN-Habitat, the Directorate-General for Regional and Urban Policy, European Commission and the Czech Government, which organised the European Urban Forum in October 2017,

discussed approaches to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the Urban Agenda for the EU and other relevant global agreements. Panellists stressed the need for the governments, the UN system and the Committee to re-focus their activities to ensure they effectively support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and address other relevant international commitments, which will be reviewed at the Regional Forum for Sustainable Development in the ECE region in March 2018 and the High-level Political Forum in July 2018.

14. The Committee requested the Bureau to prepare a comprehensive draft guidance document for the alignment of the activities of the Committee to support implementation of the urban development and housing related goals of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development and other key agreements within its existing mandate. The Committee also requested the Bureau to submit the guidance document for the adoption by the Committee at its seventy-ninth session.

15. The Committee requested the secretariat to conduct consultations with the member States on the draft guidance document to be developed by the Bureau, possibly through organisation of a survey of member States and regional, sub-regional and national workshops to be conducted, provided necessary financial resources are available.

16. Finally, the Committee requested the Bureau to formulate possible proposals and the rationale for changing the name of the Committee to ensure the name reflects more adequately its activities related to the implementation of the New Urban Agenda, the 2030 Agenda and other relevant agreements. The Committee invited the Bureau to prepare its proposals for a decision at the Committee's seventy-ninth session.

B. Sustainable housing and real estate markets

1. Implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and the ECE Strategy on Sustainable Housing and Land Management 2014-2020

Documentation: E/ECE/1478/rev.1; ECE/HBP/2017/2

17. A panel discussion was held on the topic "How the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing inspired practical steps to promote sustainable housing at regional, national and local levels" and included presentations from the Government of Italy, the EU Committee of Regions, the ECE, UN-Habitat, the Housing Europe Federation and the Glasgow School of Arts. Panellists exchanged experiences and lessons learned at national and local levels since the adoption of the Charter. The Committee was informed on the activities of the ECE-UN Habitat cooperation including work on SDG 11, specifically on the development of a methodology for measuring progress in achieving target 11.1 that includes informal settlements and inadequate housing.

18. The Committee also was informed that national and regional capacity building workshops were organised in the ECE region since the seventy-seventh session to support the implementation of the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing and the Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the ECE region for the period 2014-2020.

19. The establishment of Geneva UN Charter centres in the cities of Tirana, Tallinn and Glasgow in accordance with the guidance approved in 2016 was highlighted. The centres provide support to the implementation of the Charter and the Strategy in the respective countries. The Committee was informed on activities of the Geneva UN Charter centres including on the focus of the Geneva UN Charter Centre at the Glasgow Urban Lab - research, capacity building and implementation. The importance of developing knowledge

and building partnerships for successful implementation of the Charter and other agreements and initiatives was stressed.

20. The Committee was informed about other capacity-building activities, including participation of the Committee in the International Workshop on Housing Estates (12 October 2017), the European Urban Forum (13 October 2017, Prague) and activities on strengthening cooperation and synergies with partner organisations. The importance of the Charter and its focus on affordable housing and the role of the private sector in providing means to access affordable housing was highlighted.

21. The Committee requested the Bureau to elaborate concrete proposals for cooperation on capacity building in affordable and decent housing with its key partners, including the Housing Europe Federation.

2. Key outcomes and policy recommendations of the study on housing for migrants

Documentation: Information Document 2

22. The ECE Housing for Migrants Study that will be published in 2018, examined the current challenges in housing migrants in the ECE region. The study highlights the various challenges related to the provision of adequate/affordable housing to migrants and contains 68 informative practices in 23 countries on housing for migrants.

23. The Committee took note of the findings of the ECE housing for migrants study, approved the publication of the study report as an official publication, and requested the Bureau to explore the possibility of the development of an online database on housing for migrants.

3. Energy efficiency in buildings

Documentation: ECE/ENERGY/99; ECE/HBP/184; ECE/ENERGY/113; ECE/HBP/2017/3; ECE/ENERGY/2017/5-ECE/ENERGY/GE.6/2017/7

24. The secretariat reminded the delegates that the Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings was established by the Committee on Sustainable Energy (ECE/ENERGY/99 para 67 and Annex) and the Committee for the period 2016-17 (ECE/HBP/184, para 38). The mandate of the Task Force was renewed by the Committee on Sustainable Energy at its twenty-sixth session (26-28 September 2017) for the years 2018-2019 (ECE/ENERGY/113 para 51 and 52). The secretariat noted that the 2018-2019 terms of reference of the Task Force are contained in the Annex of document ECE/ENERGY/2017/5-ECE/ENERGY/GE.6/2017/7, and was distributed to the delegates in all three languages. The terms of reference for 2018-2019 had not changed from the original terms of reference of 2016-2017.

25. The secretariat further informed the delegates that Joint Task Force started its work in 2017 due to the availability of extra budgetary funds from the Governments of Denmark and the Russian Federation. The Secretariat invited the Committee to decide on extending the Committee's participation with the Committee on Sustainable Energy in the work of the Task Force for the period 2018-2019 in accordance with its terms of reference.

26. The representative of the Sustainable Energy Division made a presentation on the Framework Guidelines for Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings (ECE/HBP/2017/3) which were prepared in 2017. The Framework Guidelines include principles for energy efficiency standards in buildings and the representative noted that efforts were ongoing to put together an academic programme for building capacity in the region on energy efficiency standards in buildings.

27. The Committee adopted the Framework guidelines for energy efficiency standards in buildings (ECE/HBP/2017/3) and decided to continue the Committee's participation with the Committee on Sustainable Energy in the work of the Task Force for the period 2018-2019 in accordance with its terms of reference as contained in ECE/ENERGY/2017/5-ECE/ENERGY/GE.6/2017/7.

4. Activities of the Real Estate Market Advisory Group

Documentation: Information Document 3

28. The Committee was presented with the progress of the implementation of the Advisory Group's programme of work and was informed about the Roundtable on Promoting Sustainable Real Estate Markets in the ECE Region, which discussed updating the Policy Framework for Sustainable Real Estate Markets.

29. The Committee took note of the information.

C. Sustainable urban development and smart sustainable cities

1. Smart sustainable cities

Documentation: Information Documents 4 and 5

30. The Committee was presented with information on activities under the United Smart Cities project, including the finalisation of the Smart Sustainable City Profile for the town of Goris (Armenia), and the upcoming preparation of a Smart Sustainable City Profile for the town of Voznesensk (Ukraine). Requests were received also from Georgia and Liechtenstein and activities will be considered upon availability of resources. In addition, the Committee was informed about the ongoing activities supported by ECE under the U4SSC initiative, specifically Guidelines on tools and mechanisms for financing smart sustainable cities projects and Guidelines for circular cities.

31. The Committee took note of the information provided.

2. Capacity building activities on urban planning in countries with economies in transition

Documentation: Information Document 6

32. The secretariat and UN-Habitat reported on the implementation of a joint capacity-building programme, which included joint workshops and studies supported by the UN Development Account ninth tranche project. UN Habitat stressed the important link between the work on urban planning and the implementation of the Charter; UN-Habitat explained that housing challenges should be addressed in an integrated way in the context of housing in its surroundings. UN-Habitat thanked the ECE for the ongoing excellent cooperation on the activities of the UN Development Account project. The Committee was also informed on proposals for future activities under the joint programme.

33. The Committee took note of ongoing activities under the ECE/UN-Habitat joint capacity-building programme on urban planning in countries with economies in transition and the implementation of the UN Development Account 9 tranche project.

D. Land administration and management

Documentation: ECE/HBP/2017/4; Information Documents 7 and 8

34. The Vice-Chair of the Working Party on Land Administration reported on the activities carried out by the Working Party since the last session of the Committee and presented the Working Party programme of work 2018-2019 and the study on land consolidation.

35. The Working Party Bureau representative also informed on the progress with the preparation of the Technical Guidelines on formalization of informal real estate and informal markets in the ECE region.

36. The Committee adopted the Working Party programme of work 2018-2019. The Committee approved the publication of the Technical guidelines on formalization of informal real estate and informal markets in the ECE region as an official publication.

E. Country profiles on housing and land management

Documentation: ECE/HBP/2017/5; ECE/HBP/2017/6; Information Document 9

37. The Committee was presented with the revised guidelines for the preparation of country profiles on housing and land management, which are based on recommendations of an external evaluation of the country profiles sub-programme undertaken in 2016.

38. The Committee was provided with updates on the status of the country profiles on housing and land management. In particular, the Committee was informed of the key outcomes and policy recommendations in the country profile on housing and land management of Kazakhstan, on the status of the preparation of the Country Profile of Belarus and requests received by the secretariat for the next country profiles to be prepared.

39. The Chair thanked the Government of the Russian Federation for the financial support provided for the country profiles of Kazakhstan and Belarus; the UN-Habitat and UNDP-Kazakhstan for the excellent cooperation in the preparation of the Country Profile for Kazakhstan. The Chair invited member States to propose financial or in-kind expert contributions to the next country profiles. She thanked the Governments of Netherlands and the United Kingdom for the in-kind expert contributions to the study.

40. The Committee endorsed the revised guidelines for the preparation of the ECE Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management.

41. The Committee endorsed the key outcomes and policy recommendations of the Country Profile of Kazakhstan (ECE/HPB/2017/6) and approved publishing the Country Profile on the Housing Sector of Kazakhstan.

42. The Committee took note of the information provided on the preparation of the Country Profile Belarus and approved the publication of the Country Profile Belarus as an official publication.

43. The Committee approved the preparation of the Country Profile for Bulgaria pending confirmation from the government and the availability of resources.

IV. Interdivisional and interagency cooperation

Documentation: Information Document 6

44. The Committee was informed about cooperation activities with UN Environment on housing issues and UN-Habitat preparations for the World Urban Forum 9.

45. The Committee was also informed about the ongoing ECE interdivisional cooperation including activities of the Transport, Health and Environment Pan European Programme (THE PEP), the Sustainable Energy Division and the ECE-FAO Forestry and Timber Section that support the implementation of the Committee's programme of work 2016-2017.

46. The representative from THE PEP spoke on their Goal 5, which aims to integrate transport, health and environmental considerations into spatial planning, and possibilities of cooperation with the Committee. He also presented the outcomes of the Environment and Health Ministerial Conference organized by the World Health Organization (WHO) related to implementation of the 2030 Agenda, development of national portfolios of action to improve air quality and support to cities to become safe and sustainable.

47. The representative from the Sustainable Energy Division recalled that based on the recommendations of the expert group consultation, "Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings," the Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings was established and a related project has now received financial support from the governments of Denmark and the Russian Federation. The first meeting of the Task Force was organised in the framework of the project on 30 and 31 October 2017. Further, he mentioned the good cooperation at the Eighth International Forum on Energy for Sustainable Development, held on 11-14 June 2017 in the framework of the EXPO 2017 "Future Energy" in Astana, Kazakhstan. This is following similar cooperation since 2010.

48. The Director of the Forests, Land and Housing Division presented activities from the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry and the Working Party on Statistics, Economics and Management related to the promotion of the use of wood for construction of buildings. She discussed that there is an interest expressed by Canada to host the next Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry session in 2018, and there are ongoing discussions about the participation of members of the Committee in an event during the Committee on Forests and the Forest Industry session.

49. The Committee took note of the information provided.

V. Programme of work and publications 2018-2019

Documentation: ECE/HBP/2017/7

50. The secretariat presented the draft programme of work 2018-2019 (ECE/HBP/2017/7).

51. The Committee adopted the programme of work and recommended it to the Executive Committee for its approval. The Committee approved the publication of the brochures of the Committee and Working Party as promotional materials.

52. The secretariat reported on the status of financial and in-kind support to the implementation of the Committee's programme of work. Delegations were invited to contribute both financially and in-kind to the programme of work of the Committee.

53. The Committee took note of the information provided.

VI. Strategic framework 2020-2021

Documentation: ECE/HBP/2017/8 Corr. 1

54. The document ECE/HBP/2017/8 Corrigendum 1 was presented. The document included the draft Strategic Framework 2020-2021 for the housing and land management component of Sub-programme 08: Housing, Land Management and Population.

55. The Committee adopted the Strategic Framework 2020-2021 (ECE/HBP/2017/8 Corr.1) for the housing and land management component of the subprogramme.

VII. Ministerial Segment

A. Opening of the meeting

56. Her Excellency Ms. Karla Šlechtová, Minister of Regional Development of Czech Republic, opened the ministerial segment with a keynote address. Ms. Šlechtová noted the importance of the implementation of the SDGs, especially SDG 11. Ms. Šlechtová discussed the importance of partnerships with various actors, such as other UN bodies, governments and academia for actions to provide adequate housing for all. Ms. Šlechtová also stressed on the importance of Ministers getting more involved with the United Nations because they are the agents of change. Ms. Šlechtová also expressed her gratitude to the participants attending and stressed on the need to take united action to achieve the SDGs. She called on other member States to contribute financial resources to the activities of the Committee and to carry out relevant activities in their respective countries.

57. Mr. Michael Möller, Under Secretary General and the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva welcomed the participants of this Ministerial Meeting on behalf of Ms. Olga Algayerova, ECE Executive Secretary. Mr. Möller congratulated the Committee on its 70th anniversary, and applauded its dedication to creating affordable, adequate and decent housing for all. Mr. Möller focussed on the challenges of the changing landscapes in the housing and urban development arena caused due to the refugee crisis and increasing urbanisation. He stressed the merits of the New Urban Agenda and the need to create sustainable cities and the importance of creating affordable and adequate housing for the young and the elderly.

58. The Chair of the Committee thanked the speakers for their opening remarks, and reported on the objectives and expected outcomes of the Ministerial meeting, including the discussion on the Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Development.

B. Review of the progress made and future challenges in housing and land management in ECE member States

Documentation: Information Documents 10, 11 and 12

59. The high-level discussion was organised as two roundtables on (1) Decent, affordable, adequate and healthy housing for all and (2) Sustainable urban development strategies. The discussion focused on how regional cooperation and exchange of best practices support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda and the Geneva UN Charter for Sustainable Housing.

60. *Roundtable 1: Decent, affordable, adequate and healthy housing for all* addressed achievements and challenges in providing decent, affordable, adequate and healthy housing

in the ECE region, housing finance at national and subnational levels and regional cooperation on the topic. An introduction to the discussion was made by Ms. Orna Rosenfeld, Adjunct Professor, Sciences Po, L'Institut d'études politiques de Paris. The panellists included: His Excellency Mr. Michael Falzon, Minister for the Family, Children's Rights and Social Solidarity, Malta; Ms. Justyna Skrzydło, Deputy Minister of Infrastructure and Construction, the Republic of Poland; Ms. Galina Khovanskaya, Chair of the Committee on Housing Policies and on the Housing Sector, State Duma of the Russian Federation; and Mr. Marko Čanović, Director General for Housing Development, Ministry of Sustainable Development and Tourism of Montenegro.

61. Interventions were made by: His Excellency Mr. Thomas Hajnoczi, Ambassador and Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations Office and specialized institutions in Geneva; His Excellency Mr. Narek Sargsyan, Chair of the State Urban Development Committee under to the Government of the Republic of Armenia; His Excellency Mr. Karam Hasanov, Chair of State Property Issues Committee of Azerbaijan; His Excellency Mr. Bakytbek Abdiev, Director, State Agency of Architecture, Construction and Housing and Communal Services of Kyrgyzstan; His Excellency Mr. Jamshed Ahmadzoda, Chair of the Committee of Construction and Architectural Activities of Tajikistan; Mr. Ernst Hauri, Director of the Federal Office for Housing of Switzerland; Mr. Sergiy Komnatnyi, Head of the State Fund for the Youth Housing under the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine; and Ms. Leilani Farha, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Adequate Housing. The roundtable discussed the achievements and challenges in the provision of decent, affordable, adequate and healthy housing. It also noted that these challenges could be addressed through regional cooperation and exchange of best practices.

62. *Roundtable II: Sustainable Urban Development Strategies* addressed urban development achievement and challenges, transition to Smart Sustainable Cities in the pan European region, Smart Sustainable Cities financing and regional cooperation issues. Mr. Brian Evans, Professor and Head of Urbanism, the Glasgow School of Art, Glasgow, UK and Mr. Amitabh Mehta, Director, Innovative Financing, Strategy, Corporate Partnerships, Indus Blue Consulting, Geneva, Switzerland, made introductions to the discussions. The panelists included Her Excellency Ms. Karla Šlechtová, Minister of Regional Development of Czech Republic, Mr. Nicolaas Beets, Dutch Urban Envoy, the Netherlands, and Ms. Catherine Johnston, Head of Planning, Glasgow City Council, UK. Interventions were made by: Ms. Denitsa Nikolova, Deputy Minister of Regional Development and Public Works, Bulgaria; Mr. Ciprian Lucian Rosca, State Secretary, Ministry of Regional Development, Public Administration and European Funds of Romania; Mr. Vitalii Lukov, Mayor of Voznesensk; Mr. Tadashi Matsumoto, Coordinator for National Urban Policy, Climate Change and Green Growth, Cities, Urban Policies and Sustainable Development Division, OECD; and Mr. Grzegorz Gaida, Senior Urban Specialist, the European Investment Bank. The roundtable discussed the achievements and challenges in promoting sustainable urbanization. It also discussed that regional cooperation and exchange of best practices are some ways in which these challenges could be addressed.

1. Outcomes of the discussions related to housing

63. Member State delegations discussed the challenges, progress made, and actions taken with regard to housing in their countries. They emphasized the importance of access to affordable and adequate housing, including for long-term rent and ensuring that the renovation of housing stocks are energy-efficient. In addition, the provision of adequate housing as a human right was noted.

64. Member States also emphasized the importance of participation in the international community to exchange experiences; and noted the role of ECE in coordinating policy discussions and advising member States.

65. Several delegations expressed support for the UN Geneva Charter on Sustainable Housing and the Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development. They also expressed appreciation for the work of the Committee in providing a platform to allow member States to discuss housing, land management and spatial planning.

2. Outcomes of the discussions related to land management

66. Delegations discussed the challenges, progress made, and actions taken in relation to land management in their countries. They reported on significant advances to registration of real estate and automated registration systems, which support sustainable housing and land markets.

67. Member States also noted the importance of international cooperation and of data interoperability between countries.

3. Outcomes of the discussions related to urban development

68. Delegations discussed the challenges, progress made, and actions taken in relation to urban development in their countries. It was highlighted that place-making and design are key factors in the health and well-being of individuals. It was reinforced that member States must work with local governments to develop tailored plans for sustainable urban development.

69. It was highlighted that sustainability, inclusion and economic growth are key ways to support urbanization and that innovative financial mechanisms can be pathway to bring the public and private sectors together to implement the SDGs in the socio-economic context.

C. Adoption of the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development

Documentation: ECE/HBP/2017/1

70. The Chair of the Committee introduced the draft Declaration for its adoption.

71. The Ministers and heads of delegation of the ECE region adopted the Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development (ECE/HBP/2017/1) without amendments.

D. Closing of the Ministerial Meeting

72. The Chair of the Committee summarized the discussions of the meeting and noted the importance of the adopted Declaration as a set of policy objectives for the region and as a guide for the work of the Committee during the coming years. She thanked the speakers and closed the meeting.

VIII. Election of the Bureau

73. The Committee elected the Bureau for its seventy-ninth session as follows:

- Ms. Elena Szolgayová, Slovakia (Chair)
- Mr. Elshad Khanalibayli, Azerbaijan
- Ms. Alena Rakava, Belarus
- Mr. Borka Bobovec, Croatia
- Ms. Daniela Grabmüllerová, Czech Republic (Vice Chair)
- Ms. Lise Nielsen, Denmark (Vice Chair)
- Mr. Nino Gventsadze, Georgia
- Ms. Stefano Scalera, Italy
- Ms. Vilma Vaiciuniene, Lithuania
- Mr. Andrey Chibis, Russian Federation
- Mr. Aša Rogelj, Slovenia
- Mr. Nuria Raga Sastre, Spain
- Ms. Maria Ulfvarson Dahlman, Sweden
- Ms. Emma Vincent, UK.

74. The Chair also welcomed Mr. Fredrik Zetterquist as an ex officio member of the Bureau of the Committee in his capacity as Chair of the Working Party.

75. The Bureau was elected by acclamation.

IX. Other business

76. There was no other business raised.

X. Adoption of the report and closing of the session

77. The Chair summarized the major decisions taken by the Committee. The Committee adopted its report based on a draft prepared by the secretariat. The Chair proposed a date for the organization of the next Committee session. The Committee agreed on 3 to 5 October 2018.

78. The seventy-eighth session was closed.

Annex I

Geneva Ministerial Declaration on Sustainable Housing and Urban Development

Adopted by the Ministers and the Heads of Delegation participating in the Ministerial Segment of the seventy-eighth session of the ECE Committee on Housing and Land Management on the occasion of the seventieth anniversary of the establishment of the Committee

A. Preamble

1. We, the Ministers and the Heads of Delegation from the member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, met to discuss the challenges and opportunities of the sustainable housing in liveable cities and sustainable human settlements, and to mark the seventieth anniversary of the Committee.

2. We appreciate the historical importance of the Committee as a cornerstone of the pan-European cooperation in the field of housing and urban development, including its transforming efforts to address housing and urban development challenges in countries with economies in transition. The Committee is the only open pan-European intergovernmental platform to deal with these topics from all the sustainable development dimensions - economic, environmental and social, including cultural aspects. The work of the Committee is aimed mainly at assisting member States in the region to address a number of major housing and urban challenges, including those of an international nature, such as energy-efficiency measures in the residential buildings, and preventing social exclusion due to unaffordable housing for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups of people, etc. All aspects are discussed, and practical steps, guidelines and methodologies are established to effectively support member States in a results-oriented way.

3. We reiterate the importance for governments at all levels and relevant stakeholders to promote the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda on Financing for Development, the UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning, and the Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the ECE Region for the Period 2014-2020. We welcome the adoption of the New Urban Agenda by the Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development - Habitat III.

4. We underline the need to promote coherence, partnership and cross-sectoral links in implementing the above-mentioned global and regional accords. We recognize the role of the United Nations Regional Commissions in the regional level implementation of, follow-up to, and review of, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the New Urban Agenda.

5. We recognize the importance of cooperating with all relevant stakeholders, including local and regional governments and authorities, the United Nations system, other international organizations, including regional and subregional ones, professionals and academia, the private sector, civil society, women and youth

B. We are aware of the following trends:

6. Across the region, the shift to a post-industrial, knowledge economy, and the increasingly important role of services, are changing the structure and character of the economy, introducing demands for enhanced qualifications from the labour market and placing different spatial demands on cities. The knowledge economy and the digital revolution flourish around centres of scientific and educational excellence, and are placing new demands on the physical structure of the cities, including challenges regarding access to affordable housing.

7. Information and communication technologies (ICTs) play a growing role in the development of smart, sustainable cities, including initiatives aimed at sustaining and improving quality of life in urban areas, though this growth presents its own unique set of challenges, such as privacy, security, defence of public interests, etc.

8. Lack of affordability of housing is a critical matter, leading to problems of accessibility to adequate housing, and social exclusion. Social and spatial inequality within and among the cities in the region has been growing, making some high quality urban areas and housing accessible and affordable to only the most affluent. Homelessness and housing exclusion have been increasing. In many countries, furthermore, the recent waves of migration are exacerbating the complexity of the growing inequalities.

9. There is widespread consensus for intergovernmental action on the environment and climate change. In the cities of the ECE region, this will mean an accelerated trend to further decreasing pollution also for improved human health and well-being and more rapidly de-carbonizing urban development. These will require adequate environmental regulations and high volumes of public and private investment, while respecting other sustainable development pillars.

10. International standards in housing and sustainable development are driving action towards resilient, connected, spatially- and socially-integrated and compact cities in an equitable partnership with rural areas. There is a trend towards people-centred and integrated planning.

11. These aims and processes will continue to require collaboration, consensus and positive action among national, regional and local governments and all relevant stakeholders. Addressing these evermore complex social, economic and environmental challenges will require new paradigms and a redoubling of efforts from the governance systems to achieve access to decent and affordable housing for all and sustainable urbanization.

C. We invite national, regional and local governments and authorities and all other relevant stakeholders to work together to address the housing and urban challenges, in particular by

(a) Economic dimension

12. Promoting innovative and productive cities to increase their attractiveness, with a focus on innovation, inclusiveness, improvement of youth perspectives, and job creation through entrepreneurial-friendly environments.

13. Promoting access to decent and affordable housing for all. Reducing the economic polarization in growing cities that is the result of housing market imbalances by (a) promoting tenure balanced housing policies and supporting all tenures; (b) addressing housing cost induced poverty and household indebtedness arising from high housing costs;

and (c) promoting housing supply, making cities more attractive for people, and addressing housing abandonment in shrinking cities and areas.

14. Promoting the improvement of access to basic services allowing sustainable growth and job creation. Further efforts to achieve the empowerment of women and gender equality are priorities of the urban development policy

(b) Social dimension

15. Strengthening the use of housing and spatial planning and urban design, to also address human well-being, taking into account the needs of the disabled, the elderly and other vulnerable groups, and ensuring participation in planning by all key stakeholders and the inhabitants.

16. Integrating health and mobility concerns in urban planning and policy implementation to reduce congestion and emissions, and to increase physical activity levels to achieve improved human well-being and better health for all.

17. Promoting inclusive cities by addressing the multiple aspects of housing, urban poverty and exclusion, and in particular the aspect of ensuring access to adequate housing for all.

18. Developing and implementing capacity-building programmes for participatory, integrated, sustainable, resilient and affordable human settlement planning while enabling the involvement of all relevant stakeholders

(c) Environmental dimension

19. Promoting green, compact and resilient cities by increasing urban resource efficiency (decreasing the consumption of energy, water and land, and reducing waste and air pollution), a circular economy, sustainable urban mobility solutions, and enhancing green infrastructure and nature-based solutions.

20. Promoting standards of housing provision and building renovation to also increase energy efficiency, supporting the use of renewable energy, and introducing measures for adaptation to, and mitigation of, climate change, to ensure environmentally sustainable and healthy housing supply for all.

(d) Principles of governance

21. Promoting national housing and urban policies conducive to sustainable urbanization, and their translation to locally adequate housing and urban legislation and regulations; promoting the strategic planning of human settlements; and enacting measures at national, regional and local levels to ensure that policies are appropriate for each scale of governance, thereby guaranteeing the most effective results.

22. Stressing that approaches will be specific to the place and context and, to be effective, be as varied as the diversity of the countries, economies, societies and cultures in the region.

23. Promoting smart and sustainable cities and an integrated and holistic approach to planning and managing cities. Promoting the use of ICTs in cities in a way that is mindful of both the opportunities, including increased efficiencies, as well as the challenges, such as privacy, security, defence of public interest, etc.

24. Promoting good urban governance by supporting and building capacity at the local level of local and regional governments and authorities and other stakeholders such as homeowner and tenant associations and housing cooperatives, a key element for the sustainable development of urban areas.

25. Promoting secure tenure and the availability of housing options, including the neutral treatment of tenures, in order to encourage the development of adequate supplies of affordable housing.

26. Focusing on capacity-building and institutional support, especially for countries with economies in transition, to promote policy implementation.

Introducing effective financial systems at the national, regional and local levels, enabling local governments of cities to better plan and implement the programmes elaborated and support the equitable and sustainable development of housing and human settlements.

(e) Regional cooperation for implementation

27. Elaborating country-specific policy guidance and recommendations on challenges related to housing, urban development and land management in the ECE region.

28. Developing in-depth assessments and flagship reports, including a series of Country Profiles on Housing and Land Management.

29. Participating in the relevant global and regional processes to harmonize methodologies, definitions and approaches to data collection in the area of housing, urban development and land management and administration at all levels; supporting development of common terms, language definitions and standards.

30. Promoting dialogue between governments and relevant stakeholders using existing platforms, to facilitate the exchange of experience and the sharing of good practices.

31. Creating regional networks of governments, experts and stakeholders; organizing workshops, study trips and other capacity building activities to promote implementation.

32. Creating synergies using existing platforms and involving relevant programmes, agencies, bodies and other stakeholders, to ensure consistency and complementarity, and allowing effective collaboration on housing, urban planning and land-related issues.

33. Regularly monitoring and following up on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the New Urban Agenda, the UN-Habitat Global Housing Strategy, the International Guidelines on Urban and Territorial Planning, the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing, the Strategy for Sustainable Housing and Land Management in the ECE Region for the period 2014-2020, and the ECE/ITU Smart Sustainable City Indicators; and, for that purpose, strengthening the capacity of national governments, including their statistical services, and improving mechanisms for information exchange and using monitoring tools that ensure a coherent methodology across the region and global comparability.

D. We confirm our commitment to promote the implementation of the above-mentioned agreements and principles through synergies and cross-sectoral actions. We commit to fostering the global, national, regional and local implementation of the economic, social and environmental actions mentioned above

Annex II

Terms of Reference for the Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings of the ECE Region for 2018-2019

I. Background

1. The Joint Task Force on Energy Efficiency Standards in Buildings was established by the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the Committee on Housing and Land Management with the participation of the Working Party 6 for 2016-2017 with a possibility of extension. The mandate of the Joint Task Force is proposed to be extended for the period of 2018-2019 with a possibility of extension.

II. Reporting

2. The Joint Task Force will report to its parent bodies, the Committee on Housing and Land Management and the Committee on Sustainable Energy.

III. Objective

3. The objective of the Joint Task Force is to enhance the harmonization of the markets for products and technological appliances that increase energy efficiency in buildings of the ECE member States. It broadens the exchange of experiences and approaches to increased uptake of energy efficiency measures in buildings among the member States. The Joint Task Force is guided by recommendations and decisions of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the Committee on Housing and Land Management.

4. The Joint Task Force will facilitate the ECE's support towards the achievement of the targets set by international initiatives such as the Global Goal 7, the Sustainable Energy for All Initiative, and the Geneva UN Charter on Sustainable Housing. All of these initiatives stress the importance of energy efficiency to ensure energy security, mitigate GHG emissions and ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.

IV. Planned activities and outputs

5. To achieve its objectives, the Joint Task Force will undertake the following activities:

(a) Mapping energy efficiency standards in buildings and preparing gap analyses;

(b) Evaluating options for the development, adoption or promotion of energy efficiency standards in buildings;

(c) Preparing guidance materials;

(d) Promoting partnerships with other international organizations;

(e) Establishing a network of experts on energy efficiency in buildings;

(f) Developing and organizing training programmes.

6. The Joint Task Force will deliver, in particular, the following outputs:

(a) Mapping of existing energy efficiency standards in buildings in the ECE region;

(b) An online database of experts on energy efficiency in buildings tailored for the needs of the ECE region;

(c) A roadmap for future ECE activities on standards.

7. All of the above mentioned activities and outputs are subject to regular consultations with and between the parent bodies, the Committee on Housing and Land Management and the Committee on Sustainable Energy, the Working Party 6, partner organizations, donors and members of the Joint Task Force and might be subject to adaptations.

V. Funding

8. The activities of the Joint Task Force are supported by extra-budgetary funds and in-kind contributions. The listed activities will be implemented depending upon the availability of funds.

VI. Timetable

9. The mandate of the Joint Task Force will cover the period of 2018-2019 with a possibility of extension.

VII. Methods of work

10. The Joint Task Force is expected, subject to availability of funds, to have two to four face-to-face meetings during its mandate. The Joint Task Force will also work via various means of electronic communications. Donors are invited to provide voluntary contributions to support its work.

VIII. Membership

11. The Joint Task Force will be open to all ECE member States. Other UN member States are also welcome to participate. The Joint Task Force comprises experts from the Committee on Housing and Land Management, the Committee on Sustainable Energy, and the Working Party 6, other ECE bodies, international organizations, such as the International Organization for Standardization, International Electrotechnical Commission, the International Partnership for Energy Efficiency Cooperation, the Copenhagen Centre on Energy Efficiency, the Consortium for Energy Efficiency, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, the Buildings Performance Institute Europe, the Global Buildings Performance Network, the North American Passive House Network, the Passive House Institute, and other relevant experts, to ensure a cross-sectoral approach to addressing energy efficiency standards and building codes. Independent technical experts on building standards and state of the art technologies will be invited to support the work of the task force by providing written contributions and participating in its meetings.

IX. Secretariat support

12. The Joint Task Force will have two co-chairs representing the Committee on Housing and Land Management and the Committee on Sustainable Energy. The Committee on Housing and Land Management and the Committee on Sustainable Energy will jointly service the Joint Task Force. This will include:

(a) Servicing the Joint Task Force meetings (with interpretation and translation where possible), including the preparation of meeting agendas and reports;

(b) Preparing background documents and studies for the Joint Task Force at its request;

(c) Arranging for financial support for members of the Joint Task Force from ECE member States, so that they can participate in its meetings.

13. Provision of the secretariat support is dependent on the availability of additional resources as described in Section V.